(a) whether Government have decided private sector investment in plantation to help restoring degraded forest area and in community land provided sharing of benefits with stakeholders including local community and land owning agency;

(b) if so, whether his Ministry has submitted proposal to the Central Government as the present policy does not allow private investment for plantations in forest land;

(c) whether his Ministry is working on similar proposals allowing private sector in affluent treatment, solid waste management, sewage disposal and eco-tourism; and

(d) if so, by what time final decision is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) The Ministry of Environment and Forests has mooted a Multi-Stakeholder Partnership (MSP) framework involving the land owning agency, the sponsor, the forest department, and the local village community for forestation on degraded forest lands, and other lands, as one of the measures to achieve one-third Forest and Tree Cover in the country.

(c) and (d) The Ministry is supporting a scheme on common effluent treatment plants (CETPs) which is also supported by State Government, CETP Associations and financial institutions. The municipal solid waste management projects are funded through the Pollution Control Boards. For operation and maintenance of Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs), which is the responsibility of the State Government concerned, States are encouraged to voluntarily adopt public private partnerships in different forms. Ministry of Environment and Forests is also working on an eco-tourism strategy to involve forest dwelling communities in providing eco-tourism services, facilitated by private sector investment.

Chemical sludge discharged by soft drink companies

1859. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH:
SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Pollution Control Board has taken steps to ensure that soft drink companies do not pollute underground water sources;

(b) whether it is a fact that soft drink companies in different parts of the country are not controlling their pollutants and chemical discharges and leaving them to percolate groundwater sources;

(c) what action as the CPCB taken to ensure that all soft drink companies avoid polluting groundwater sources; and

(d) how do Government propose to monitor their action, alongwith the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) The Ministry of Environment and Forests has notified the effluent standards for soft drink manufacturing industries under the Environment (Protection) Rules, 1986. Soft drink manufacturing industries are required to meet the notified standards and also seek consent under the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974. The State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs)/ Pollution Control Committees (PCCs) are monitoring the compliance to the notified effluent standards.

(c) and (d) The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) has requested all SPCBs/PCCs to monitor the levels of heavy metals in the sludge of effluent treatment plants (ETPs) and ensure its safe disposal in accordance with the provisions under the Hazardous Wastes (Management and Handling) Rules, 1989 as amended in 2003.

Decline in forest cover

1860. SHRI S.K. KHABIR UDDIN AHMED: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the forest coverage in the country is gradually eroding;

(b) whether it is also a fact that unplanned forestation programmes are leading to loss of ecological balance; and

(c) if so, the preventive steps being taken by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) No, Sir. The forest cover of the country is not eroding as per the assessment made by the Forest Survey of India (FSI) using satellite remote sensing technology. The figures